

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 05286

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, UN, IR
SUBJ: EXCHANGE WITH IRANIANS ON 32ND UNGA

REF: STATE 16347

SUMMARY: IN RECAP OF 32ND UNGA, IRANIAN MFA OFFICIAL COMMENTED ALONG PREDICTABLE LINES ON DYNAMICS OF THE SESSION, ASIAN AMBITIONS, MIDDLE EAST, SOUTHERN AFRICA, AND THE MIDDLE EAST NUCLEAR WEAPONS-FREE ZONE PROPOSAL. END SUMMARY.

1. AS PART OF CONTINUING CONSULTATION PROCESS, POLCOUNS VISITED MFA HEAD OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS DEPARTMENT EHSASSI MAY 30 TO TALK ABOUT 32ND UNGA AND OUTLOOK FOR 33RD. EHSASSI REMARKED AS HE HAS IN THE PAST, THAT 32ND UNGA WAS GOOD AND A PLEASANT SESSION. THERE WERE LESS CONTROVERSIAL PROPOSALS THAN IN THE PAST AND PRESIDENT MAJSOV WAS VERY GOOD. WHILE BEING A STAUNCH SUPPORTER OF THE NON-ALIGNED NATIONS HE MANAGED CONFLICTS VERY WELL BEHIND THE SCENES AND IN ADVANCE OF SESSIONS SO THAT FEW SURPRISES OR COMPLICATIONS AROSE. OF COURSE, EHSASSI COMMENTED, WITH SO MANY DIFFERENT INTERESTS REPRESENTED IN UNGA AND INCREASING TREND TOWARD REACHING
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DECISIONS MAINLY THROUGH CONSENSUS, FEWER SUBSTANTIVE RESULTS ARE POSSIBLE.

2. ON QUESTION OF ASIANS SEEKING THEIR OWN REGIONAL GROUP, EHSASSI SAID THAT WAS NOTHING NEW. HE NOTED THAT AFRICANS WERE EXTREMELY UNHAPPY WHEN VOTING ON MEMBERSHIP OF HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE RESULTED IN SIX ASIAN SEATS AND SIX AFRICAN,

RATHER THAN THE FIVE TO SEVEN QUOTA GENERALLY AGREED ON. AFRICANS WORK TOGETHER EFFECTIVELY BECAUSE THEY HAVE A FUNCTIONING OAU ORGANIZATION. ASIANS HAVE TO LOOK OUT FOR THEMSELVES. THEY NATURALLY WOULD LIKE MORE SEATS THAN AT PRESENT GIVEN THAT THEY HAVE SOME VERY LARGE, IMPORTANT NATIONS WHICH SEEK REPRESENTATION ON ALMOST AS MANY BODIES AS DO THE WESTERN EUROPEAN PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL. HE WAS THINKING OF NATIONS SUCH AS CHINA, JAPAN OR INDIA. HE RECOGNIZED, HOWEVER, THAT ISSUE OF SEAT DISTRIBUTION WAS VERY SENSITIVE AND ANY CHANGES WOULD OCCUR VERY SLOWLY.

3. ON MIDDLE EAST, POLCOUNS REGISTERED U.S. DISAPPOINTMENT (REFTEL) WITH UN DEBATES WHICH FOLLOW STOCK, STALE ARGUMENTS AND DO NOT TAKE COGNIZANCE OF PROMISING NEW DEVELOPMENTS SUCH AS THE SADAT-BEGIN INITIIVE. EHSASSI POINTED OUT THE POLITICAL REALITIES AS SEEN FROM IRAN, BUT TOOK IN OUR POINT ABOUT THE NEED TO TRY TO GET MORE HELPFUL, REALISTIC RESOLUTIONS IN THE ANNUAL UNGA EXERCISE AS AN AID TO NEGOTIATIONS TAKING PLACE ELSEWHERE.

4. ON SOUTH AFRICAN ISSUES, EHSASSI COMMENTED THAT THE ATTITUDE TAKEN BY U.S. REMAINS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT. IF A NAMIBIAN SETTLEMENT COULD BE REACHED, THAT WOULD BE VERY USEFUL FOR DISCUSSIONS IN NEXT UNGA. HOWEVER, IN VIEW OF SWAPO'S REFUSAL TO ACCEPT SETTLEMENT PROPOSAL, HE WAS NOT CONFIDENTIAL

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OPTIMISTIC. AT THE SAME TIME HE DID NOT THINK WESTERN POWERS WOULD PERMIT ANY SANCTIONS RESOLUTION AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA EVEN IF OTHER NATIONS TRIED TO PUSH ONE THROUGH.

5. ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS-FREE ZONES, EHSASSI NOTED IRAN WAS THE FIRST TO PROPOSE MIDDLE EAST ZONE AND EGYPTIANS IN PARTICULAR HAVE SEIZED THE ISSUE AND RUN WITH IT. ISRAEL RESISTS IT. IRANAINS HAVE DISCUSSED THIS MATTER WITH ISRAELIS AND FIND THEM UNYIELDING. IRANIANS CAN UNDERSTAND ISRAELI CONCERNS, BUT THIS MAKES AGREEMENT ON MIDDLE EAST ZONE AS DIFFICULT TO REACH AS EVER.

6. WE SHALL BE DISCUSSING ISSUES FOR 33RD UNGA AT MFA AGAIN LATER THIS SUMMER.
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